

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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R 251000Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4505

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BANGDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS JIDDA 2972

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP BTRA XF SA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PETER SUTHERLAND RE MAINE BUSINESS CONFERENCE

REF STATE 080468

1. MR. SUTHERLAND ARRIVED JIDDA APRIL 17, LOCAL HOLIDAY, AND REPORTED TO COMMERCIAL CENTER AND EMBASSY MORNING OF 18TH. WE PROVIDED LIST OF CONTACTS AND ON EASTER SUNDAY ASSIGNED LOCAL EMPLOYEE TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON VISITS TO LOCAL BUSINESSMEN ALL DAY. EMBASSY COMATT EXPLAINED THAT OVERTIME WOULD BE AT SUTHERLAND'S EXPENSE BUT NO REIMBURSEMENT MADE TO EMPLOYEE.

2. SUTHERLAND MET SALEM BEN LADIN, SHEIK ABDULLAH HUSSEINI OF LOCAL OFFICE OF MIN COM, SHEIK AHMED ABDUL LATIF OF SAUDI MONETARY AGENCY, OMAR BAJAMAL OF NATIONAL COMMERCIAL BANK, SHEIKH AHMED JUFFALI OF E.A. JUFFALI CO., FAISAL ALI REZA, SHEIKH AHMED ZEINY, SHEIKH ABDULLAH HASHIM, SHEIKH MOHAMED

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BAHARITH, ABDUL AZIZ ZEIDAN, OMAR KHASHAGGI, MOHAMED

NASHAR, ABDULLAH BAROOM, MOHAMED JAMJOOM, SHEIK
SALAHUDDIN ABDUL JAWAD, WHAIB BEN ZARG, AND ABOUT
30 OTHER PROMINENT SAUDI BUSINESSMEN AND BANKERS.

3. MR. SUTHERLAND, WHO CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN IN
SAUDI ARABIA BEFORE, WAS RELUCTANT TO KEEP APPOINTMENTS
WITHOUT BEING ACCOMPANIED AND COMPLAINED ABOUT LACK
OF SUPPORT FROM EMBASSY ALTHOUGH OFFICERS AND LOCAL
EMPLOYEES EXTENDED THEMSELVES FOR HIM DESPITE HEAVY
WORKLOAD IN PREPARATION FOR SOUTH CAROLINA IOGA.

3. GENERAL IMPRESSION OF LOCAL SAUDI BUSINESSMEN
IS THAT WORLD'S BUSINESSMEN ARE BEATING PATH TO THEIR
DOORS AND FEEL THEY DO NOT HAVE TO TRAVEL TO OTHER
PLACES TO BUY. THEY FEEL SELLERS SHOULD COME HERE.
ALTHOUGH MANY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN EXPRESSED INTEREST
IN MAINE CONFERENCE QUESTION WHETHER THEY WILL
ACUTALLY TRAVEL TO MAINE, IS MOOT.

4. SUTHERLAND MOST DEMANDING VISITOR WE HAVE EVER
HAD NAD COMPLAINED HE HAD BETTER TREATMENT
FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN VISITING SAUDI ARABIA FOR ONE
COMPANY. WE EXPLAINED THAT FOUR YEARS AGO COMATT
HAD AVERAGE OF SIX VISITORS A MONTH COMPARED TO
176 NOW AND THAT WE WOULD DO BEST WE COULD FOR HIM.
HE COMPLAINED THAT HIS BUDGET LOW AND WHEN TOLD
RECEPTION AT HIS COST DECIDED AGAINST IT.

5. HE LEFT ABOUT 70 INVITATIONS WHICH WE WILL SEND
TO WELL TARGETED FIRMS WITH ACCOMPANYING LETTER
AND HOPE FOR BEST. DESPITE EXCELLENT UNIVERSITY OF
MAINE IDEA FOR CONFERENCE, WE HAVE SOME DOUBTS RE
ITS SUCCESS IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE SAUDI BUSINESSMEN
HAS BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO SEEING THE MOUNTAIN COMING
TO MOHAMED.

6. VISITORS COMING TO JIDDA WITH A PROGRAM AS
SERIOUS AND EXTENSIVE AS THE MAINE PROJECT SHOULD
BE ADVISED TO GIVE THIS POST AT LEAST SIX WEEKS
NOTICE. ALSO A LIST OF US PARTICIPANTS, PROSPECTIVE
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OR OTHERWISE, WOULD HAVE HELPED PROMOTE CONFERENCE.
IF LIST AVAILABLE, PLEASE SEND.
PORTER

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